



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 584

February Session, 2006

Substitute House Bill No. 5549

House of Representatives, April 20, 2006

The Committee on Public Health reported through REP. SAYERS of the 60th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING CERTIFICATION OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPISTS EMPLOYED IN SCHOOLS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) No later than July 1, 2007,
- 2 the State Board of Education shall certify marital and family therapists
- 3 employed by local or regional boards of education. On or before April
- 4 1, 2007, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the
- 5 Commissioner of Public Health, shall adopt regulations, in accordance
- 6 with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to provide
- 7 standards for the certification of marital and family therapists who are
- 8 employed by local or regional boards of education. Such regulations
- 9 shall include certification requirements to be met by (1) licensure as a
- 10 marital and family therapist under section 20-195c of the general
- 11 statutes, and (2) such other experience as the State Board of Education
- 12 deems appropriate for the position of marital and family therapist in a
- 13 school system.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
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PH *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 07 \$	FY 08 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Cost	Potential	Potential
Teachers' Retirement Bd.	GF - Cost	None	Potential
Public Health, Dept.	GF - None	None	None

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 07 \$	FY 08 \$
All Municipalities	Cost	Potential	Potential

Explanation

Since most districts (statutorily school districts include the state's technical high school system) currently hire marital and family therapists under contract and do not provide fringe benefits, the bill could result in increased fringe benefit costs that would vary by municipality. Family therapists hired as certified employees would also qualify for membership in the state Teachers' Retirement System (TRS). According to the 6/30/04 TRS valuation, the state contribution rate is 12.5% of member salary. Additionally certified employees generally cost more than contracted employees thus districts would see increased costs to retain or newly hire such therapists.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5549*****AN ACT CONCERNING CERTIFICATION OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPISTS EMPLOYED IN SCHOOLS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to certify marital and family therapists employed by boards of education by July 1, 2007. The SBE, in consultation with the public health commissioner, must adopt regulations by April 1, 2007 establishing certification standards. The regulations must at least require applicants to be licensed by Department of Public Health (DPH) as marital and family therapists and have other experience the SBE considers appropriate for such a therapist working in a school system.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2006

BACKGROUND***Licensure Requirements for Marital and Family Therapists***

DPH requires applicants for licensure as a marital and family therapist to complete:

1. a graduate degree program in marital and family therapy at an accredited higher education institution or a postgraduate clinical training program approved by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education and recognized by the U.S. Education Department;
2. at least 12 months of a supervised practicum or internship supervised by the degree-granting institution or postgraduate program within no more than 24 consecutive months with (a) an emphasis in marital and family therapy and (b) at least 500 direct clinical hours including 100 hours of clinical supervision;

3. at least 12 months of relevant postgraduate experience, including at least 1,000 hours of direct client contact offering marital and family therapy after receiving a master's or doctoral degree or after the training year specified above; and
4. 100 hours of postgraduate clinical supervision by a licensed marital and family therapist not directly compensated by the license applicant for providing supervision.

Applicants must also pass a DPH-prescribed licensing exam (CGS § 20-195c).

Legislative History

The Public Health Committee eliminated a provision in the original bill (File 245) that required SBE's regulations to accept another state's certification for school system employment as a marital and family therapist if the other state has requirements at least as stringent as Connecticut's.

COMMITTEE ACTION**Education Committee**

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 25 Nay 0 (03/10/2006)

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 20 Nay 6 (04/10/2006)